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Providing social welfare, addressing people's problems Islamic Emirate's obligation, says Hanafi

KABUL: Mawlavi Abdul Salam Hanafi, the Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs of the Islamic Emirate, said Tuesday that providing social welfare and addressing people's challenges are the fundamental obligations of the current system.

Arg said in a statement that Hanafi made the remarks in a meeting with a delegation of distinguished individuals who have recently come from abroad.

Emphasizing that Afghanistan remains the collective homeland of all Afghans, Hanafi asked Afghans living abroad to come and partake in the nation's advancement and to collaborate constructively with the authorities in this endeavor.

Meanwhile, the participants appreciated the efforts of the Islamic Emirate in consolidating nationwide security and addressing the multifaceted challenges confronting the people.

They underscored that the prevailing conditions of social stability and welfare within the country have incentivized numerous individuals to return.

Moreover, they asked the leadership of the Islamic Emirate to give special priority to the execution of developmental projects throughout the nation and to facilitate employment opportunities for the citizens.

The Kabul Times

Coordination meeting for preserving Jihadi values held, ministry

KABUL: The Ministry of Information and Culture, in a statement, said Tuesday that it has held a coordination meeting with representatives of various Emirati departments to preserve Jihadi values.

The meeting was attended by Mawlavi Atiqullah Azizi, Art, and Culture Deputy Minister of Information and Culture, Mawlavi Hayatullah Muhajer Farahi, the Deputy Minister for Publication Affairs, the Finance, Administrative and Tourism Deputy Minister and some other officials, the statement said.

Sharing comprehensive information about the value and importance of preserving jihadi values, Mawlavi Atiqullah Azizi, Art, and Culture Deputy Minister of Information and Culture, said that there should be cooperation with the Directorate for the Preservation of Jihadi Values in various sectors; until the works and values of 20 years of Jihad are protected and well preserved.

Meanwhile, Mawlavi Zabihullah Noorani, the Director for the Preservation of Jihadi Values, asked the representatives of various departments to coordinate and cooperate in the preservation and collection of jihadi works.

It is to be noted that the representatives of other departments will cooperate comprehensively in the field of preserving jihadi values and collecting jihadi works in the country. **The Kabul Times**

Economy Minister discusses economic cooperation with Norwegian Charge d'Affaires

KABUL: Qari Din Mohammad Hanif, the acting Minister of Economy, met with Pierre Albert Alsace, the Norwegian Charge d'Affaires to Kabul, to discuss expanding economic and humanitarian cooperation between the two countries, the ministry said in a statement Tuesday.

Qari Hanif emphasized the need for the international community and aid organizations to prioritize development assistance, stressing that such efforts are crucial for fostering sustainable economic infrastructure, reducing reliance on foreign aid, and generating job opportunities to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Outlining the effectiveness of precise economic policies in stabilizing the Afghani currency, curbing inflation, and promoting both exports and imports, he stated that the improvements in national revenue, domestic production, and regional economic cooperation, have created a favorable environment for attracting investments in large-scale projects.

Minister Hanif stressed that the long-term solution to Afghanistan's economic issues lies in leveraging internal capacities and revenue sources.

He also called for the removal of economic sanctions and the release of Afghanistan's frozen reserves to improve the economic and living conditions of its citizens.

Meanwhile, the Norwegian Charge d'Affaires praised the Islamic Emirate's management of economic programs over the past three years, saying that despite facing challenges such as economic sanctions, frozen foreign assets, and halted international development aid, the IEA has made significant progress in maintaining economic stability and implementing development projects in the country. He also assured continued humanitarian assistance from Norway to the Afghan people.

The Kabul Times

Kabul, Astana hold talks on strengthening bilateral relations

KABUL: The acting Minister of Industry and Commerce of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Nooruddin Azizi, in a meeting with the Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Kabul, Gaziz Akbasov, discussed enhancing bilateral trade relations, the ministry said in a statement Tuesday. The establishment of a trade center for Afghan traders in Almaty, the implementation of commitments under existing trade contracts between businesses from both countries and the encouragement of Kazakh investors to invest in Afghanistan have also been discussed in the meeting, the statement said.

According to the statement, the two sides discussed facilitating visa issuance processes for Afghan traders through the Kazakh Embassy in Kabul.

Addressing trade-related challenges and disputes, with both parties exchanging views on effective solutions to support smoother commercial interactions between the two nations has also been discussed in the meeting, the statement concluded.

The Kabul Times

Contract signed with Turkish company to extract Kandahar marble

KABUL: Mullah Hedayatullah Badri, the acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum, in an official ceremony, signed a contract worth $6.2 million for Kandahar marble mine extraction with a Turkish company, the ministry said in a statement Tuesday.

Under the 30-year agreement, the contracting company will be responsible for the exploration, extraction, and processing of marble from the Dara-e-Noor mine.

The investment is expected to enhance local employment opportunities and contribute to the overall economic development of the region.

The mine, commonly known as the Dara-e-Noor Marble Mine, is located along the Kandahar-Herat highway in the Maiwand district of the province.

Afghans have expressed their support for the Islamic Emirate's development plans, viewing it as a crucial move towards the country's self-sufficiency and development.

The Kabul Times

Public Health Ministry marks World Cancer Day

WORLD CANCER DAY

KABUL: The Public Health Ministry of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan marked World Cancer Day on Tuesday, announcing that stomach, esophagus, and breast cancer most common types in Afghanistan. Addressing the event, Abdul Wali Haqqani, the Administrative Deputy Minister of Public Health, said that the most common types of cancer in Afghanistan are stomach and esophageal cancer among men and breast cancer among women.

Haqqani also announced the activation of a 200-bed hospital dedicated to cancer treatment in the country, emphasizing that this center has started providing services to cancer patients.

"A 200-bed hospital, previously belonging to the Administrative and Civil Service Reform Commission, has been allocated by the Ministry of Public Health for cancer treatment. This center is now officially providing services to cancer patients," he said, calling the international community to assist Afghanistan in improving healthcare services, particularly in cancer diagnosis and treatment. **The Kabul Times**

Work begins on water dam in Ghazni

KABUL: The acting Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Mullah Mohammad Younus Akhundzada, kicked off the construction work on a water dam in the Ghazni province, the ministry said in a statement Tuesday. According to the statement, the dam will be constructed at a cost of 19 million Afghani in Nawa district of the province. The dam has the capacity to store 30,000 cubic meters of water and will irrigate thousands of acres of land, the statement added. After the re-establishment of the Islamic Emirate, hundreds of water dams have been constructed and construction work on dozens of others is underway across the country. **The Kabul Times**

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Food for thought

Today's generation guarantees our bright future

KNC development; people optimistic about living in suitable environment

Being developed in the Deh Sabz area, a few kilometers northeast of the capital, Kabul, the Kabul New City (KNC) is intended to provide modern metropolitan amenities, aiming to transform the said region into a fully developed urban center.

The main aim of the mega project is a solution to the growing needs of Kabul's population, which continues to strain the capital's limited infrastructure.

As an urban development mega project, the KNC was initiated by the Afghan government in 2006 and approved by the cabinet in 2009, covering an area of 722 square kilometers in the northeast of Kabul, the country's capital. However, the work on the project did not develop even with an adequate and long time of nearly two decades during the past two consecutive so-called republic governments. The warlords, government authorities, and powerful men's interferences delayed the work of the most important projects that helped resolve the massively crowded Kabul city's population challenges.

Recently, reports quoted the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing as saying that the development plan for the first section of the initial phase of the New Kabul Project has been approved, which is good news for the country's residents.

Currently, work is ongoing on the first and second sections of this phase and is expected to be completed as soon as possible.

According to the ministry, construction work on the third section is also set to begin soon.

The report from the ministry expects that after the finalization of the development plan, the work on the first phase will accelerate, especially in Parcel A, as the national company has promised to complete its projects after the plan's approval.

Officials of the New Kabul Project emphasize that this plan meets global standards and will be completed within the specified timeframe.

On the other hand, the head of the ongoing project said that they are committed to implementing the project based on international standards and under the supervision of the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, as dozens of subsidiary companies are involved in this project, and the proposed plan will be fully implemented.

The Islamic Emirate should expedite the project as, given the growing population and urban challenges in the capital, the soon implementation of the project is very important.

With the completion of the Kabul New City project, congestion, air pollution, and urban problems would decrease, and the Kabul population is now heavily growing significantly.

The accelerated work process of the project has made the people optimistic, and they hoped that the vital scheme would be completed so people could live in a suitable environment.

The New Kabul Project has been designed by a Japanese company and consists of four phases.

Each phase has 15 sections, and according to officials from the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, the project will cover an area 1.5 times the current size of Kabul and will have the capacity to accommodate three million people, as media reported.

Tourist numbers growing amid sure security

In Afghanistan, tourism is regulated by the Ministry of Information and Culture, managing at least 350 tourism companies operating in the country. Historians said tourism was at its peak before the 1978 Saur Revolution, which was followed by decades of warfare. Between 2013 and 2016, Afghan embassies issued between 15,000 and 20,000 tourist visas annually.



Following the Islamic Emirate return to power in August 2021, visitor numbers gradually increased from 691 in 2021 to 2,300 in 2022, reaching 7,000 in 2023. The country has currently four international airports, which include Kabul International Airport, Mazar-e-Sharif International Airport, the Ahmad Shah Baba International Airport in Kandahar, and Herat International Airport. It also has many smaller domestic airports such as Bamyan Airport, Bost Airport, Chaghcharan Airport, Farah Airport, Fayzabad Airport, Ghazni Airport, Jalalabad Airport, Khost Airport, Kunduz Airport, Maymana Airport, Nili Airport, Tarinkot Airport, and Zaranj Airport.

Particularly after the resumption of power by the Islamic Emirate, guest houses, and hotels are found in every city of Afghanistan. Some of the major hotels in Kabul are the Serena Hotel, the Hotel Inter-Continental Kabul, and the Safi Landmark Hotel. Most places in the country serve traditional Afghan cuisine.

Afghanistan is full of historical attractions with Fayzabad, the capital and largest city of Badakhshan Province, having several hotels and tourist attractions. The Fayzabad Airport serves the population of the entire province.

There is also a road network from Fayzabad to other districts. Tourists can book a hotel in the city and then drive from there to Ishkashim, which is a border town next to the Afghanistan–Tajikistan border. They can then drive to the Wakhan National Park in Wakhan District. Wakhan is one of the most coldest and isolated districts of Afghanistan.

So, the leadership of the Ministry of Information and Culture has said on its webpage that it was committed to cultural development, quality publications, the development and progress of the tourism industry, and the balanced promotion of youth, and the recent reforms in this ministry show our strong will to achieve these goals.

Recently, local officials in Zabul say that after the reconstruction of the Kabul-Kandahar highway, the number of domestic tourists visiting the province's natural attractions has increased. They say that more than ever, better facilities and conveniences have been provided for tourists. "Security has now been ensured, and with the construction of the Kabul-Kandahar highway, visits to Zabul's recreational areas have increased, and more facilities for travel and tourism have been made available," said Zabiullah Jawhar, the spokesperson for Zabul's security command as quoted by local media.

Shinkay mountainous area is one of Zabul's most important tourist attractions region, located in the Shinkay district. This area hosts many visitors not only in spring and summer but also in winter. Some domestic tourists who have visited this area are calling for more tourism-related facilities.

"This is the Shinkay area. Many young people come here in winter for recreation because it is a great place for tourism and relaxation," said Abdul Halim Ahmadi, a resident of Zabul.

"Now that security has been established, more residents of Zabul are coming to these areas for recreation. But we request that more services be provided for tourists, such as the construction of shops and restaurants," said Ahmadullah Rahmani, another resident of Zabul the Afghan popular TOLOnews TV quoted.

"Most Zabul residents travel to surrounding areas for recreation during the winter season. With security now ensured, Shinkay has also become a popular destination," stated Mohammad Rahim Jawad, another resident of Zabul. The snow-covered mountains, vast plains, and historical sites of this area have attracted the attention of many domestic tourists. Abdul Wasi, who came from Kandahar to visit Zabul's recreational sites, said: "We have come here from Kandahar. The government should provide more facilities for tourists in this area and establish markets so that visitors from other regions are encouraged to come here."

"I have also come from Kandahar to Zabul. This mountainous area is a great place for recreation," said Hikmatullah, another tourist. In addition to its natural attractions, Zabul also has significant historical sites that attract both domestic and foreign tourists. Among the attractions are Sahraana, Sur Ghar (which means Red Mountain), Bala Hisar, Koh-e Bori, and the Qala-e-Shah Alam Khan, which hosts a large number of visitors each year.

Inam Hashemi



Current U.S. hegemonic policies and their impact on international politics

Part II

Donald Trump entered the White House with a nationalist and protectionist economic approach, under the slogan "America First." He sought to secure a greater role for the United States on the global stage by emphasizing national interests.

Trump believed that international trade and military agreements should be revised in favor of the U.S. and aimed to reduce the country's dependence on other nations.



One of the key aspects of his foreign policy was withdrawing from international agreements.

He pulled the U.S. out of the Paris Climate Accord, the Iran Nuclear Deal (JCPOA), and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). These withdrawals led to a loss of trust among many countries regarding America's commitments and introduced new challenges to the international system. Furthermore, he insisted on strengthening U.S. borders and suspended humanitarian aid to third-world countries.

Trump's harsh criticism of NATO and his insistence that member states increase their financial contributions strained America's relationships with traditional allies and heightened tensions with its rivals. Additionally, he escalated international tensions by imposing severe economic sanctions on countries like Iran and China. These sanctions, on the one hand, violated human rights principles and international law and on the other hand, limited people's access to essential needs such as food, medicine, and healthcare.

These actions could be considered violations of human rights based on Articles 22 and 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Under international law, economic sanctions should be applied in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on ordinary people.

However, the broad and unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. disregarded these principles, leading to severe harm to the civil and economic structures of the targeted countries.

The Trump administration repeatedly conditioned humanitarian aid on the recipient countries' acceptance of U.S. policies.

Afghanistan was no exception, as Trump's approach toward the country was based on economic pressure to control its internal policies.

Increasing pressure on the Afghan government and people has long been one of America's familiar tools.

According to international law, humanitarian aid should remain separate from political considerations, and countries should not use it as a tool of coercion.

From this perspective, Trump's policies in this regard included several legal and ethical violations.

Furthermore, according to the principles of the United Nations and international conventions, humanitarian aid should be provided solely based on human needs, without political conditions.

The U.S. decision to reduce or cut these aid programs for political purposes is a violation of this principle.

Moreover, the UN Charter obliges countries to engage in international cooperation to address humanitarian crises.

Using aid as a means of political pressure contradicts international commitments.

According to humanitarian law, particularly the principles of the Geneva Conventions, countries are obligated to provide essential aid during humanitarian crises. Trump's actions, which deprived the Afghan people of such assistance, could be interpreted as violations of these obligations.

Under international law, collective punishment is illegal.

When the United States reduces humanitarian aid as a tool of pressure on a government, it effectively punishes millions of Afghans living in dire conditions.

This action could be deemed illegal under international legal frameworks.

The suspension of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan during this period not only stemmed from Trump's hegemonic policies aimed at exerting pressure on weaker nations but was also legally questionable under international law.

These policies contradicted the principles of humanitarian neutrality, international humanitarian law, and the obligations outlined in the UN Charter. Given these factors, it can be concluded that the instrumentalization of humanitarian aid as a tool of political pressure lacks legal legitimacy and does not align with international standards.

In the realm of international trade and economic policies, Trump imposed tariffs on imports from China and the European Union in an effort to bring production and employment back to the United States.

This approach was considered a response to the country's internal economic challenges and was a top priority for his administration. However, these policies exacerbated trade wars and reduced international economic cooperation.

Some analysts argue that while these policies may have benefited America's short-term economic interests, they will have long-term negative consequences on global trade and economic relations—consequences that may be difficult to reverse.

Firooz Ahmad Ebrahimi

Afghanistan redefining its role on global stage

Afghanistan, a country with a turbulent history and repeated experiences of internal conflicts and dependence on foreign support, has always held a unique position among regional and global actors.

Now, it stands on the verge of fundamental changes in its foreign policy.



This shift not only reflects a willingness to reassess past approaches but also signifies a serious effort to establish relations based on shared interests, respect for national sovereignty, and the principles of international law under Sharia law.

Nowadays, as the world witnesses geopolitical transformations and a redefinition of international relations, Afghanistan must also redefine its position in a way that not only frees it from past dependencies but also positions it as a bridge between East and West and a symbol of efforts toward peace and sustainable development.

Afghanistan's recent efforts to redefine its foreign relations reflect a deep understanding by its leaders of the new global realities.

In the past, the country's foreign policy was largely based on dependence on foreign aid and military support.

However, with the change in governance and shifts in regional and global dynamics, the need for an independent policy based on national interests is more critical than ever.

The principles upheld by international law and the United Nations Charter guarantee national sovereignty and the right of every country to determine its own destiny—an issue that Afghanistan has consistently defended.

In this context, reassessing diplomatic approaches, engaging in new negotiations, and utilizing legal and international mechanisms can help establish the necessary foundation for mutual relations with other nations.

From an analytical perspective, the shift in Afghanistan's foreign policy is not only a response to external pressures and threats but also a reflection of a deep understanding of the country's internal capacities and its potential economic, social, and cultural strengths.

The new Afghan government, drawing on past experiences, is determined to distance itself from dependency on foreign support and to build a foreign policy based on the principles of independence, justice, and mutual interests.

According to international legal frameworks such as the United Nations Charter, every country has the right to redefine its relations based on principles of cooperation and mutual respect within the framework of national sovereignty and without external interference.

This approach can open new avenues for diplomatic engagement and, as a result, strengthen Afghanistan's role on the international stage as an independent and self-sufficient nation.

The shift in Afghanistan's foreign policy must also be accompanied by structural changes and reforms in economic and social sectors.

Only when the foundation of the national economy is built on domestic production and value-added industries—rather than reliance on foreign resources—will the country be able to establish itself as a powerful player on the international stage.

Investing in productive economic sectors, improving technological infrastructure, and developing human resources are key measures that can strengthen Afghanistan's position.

For instance, investment in agriculture, mining, and processing industries can help reduce dependence on foreign aid and improve the living standards of the people.

These initiatives, alongside a strategic foreign policy grounded in legal principles, will pave the way for a sustainable economy and an independent foreign policy.

On the other hand, changes in Afghanistan's foreign relations could have significant impacts on regional stability. In a world where geopolitical rivalries and regional dynamics are rapidly evolving, the role of countries that can foster constructive and cooperative interactions with others becomes increasingly important.

By leveraging its diplomatic and communication capabilities, Afghanistan can act as a catalyst for facilitating dialogue and resolving regional conflicts.

This, alongside its economic and cultural roles, could strengthen regional integration and solidarity while preventing military and economic tensions.

See P4

Increased trade level to further strengthen Afghanistan's economy

Afghanistan is speedily changing into a key trade, transit, and communication hub in the region, as it is acting as a land-bridging link between Pakistan, China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Iran.



Trade between Afghanistan and countries in the region and world has increased considerably in the past one year, comparing to the previous year.

Increasing trade can make Afghanistan's economy even stronger.

Afghanistan's exports and imports have increased considerably over the course of 2024, as over $12 billion worth of goods have been exported and imported in the past year.

The country's Ministry of Industry and Commerce has said that Afghanistan has made trade transactions worth $12.422 billion with all countries in the region and world in the past year.

This comes as the trade volume during the course of 2023 was $9.594 billion — about $7.710 billion in imports and $1.884 billion in exports.

According to the ministry, the imports are valued at some $10.619 billion, and exports are about $1.308 billion.

The imports included spare parts, vehicle machinery, oil, electrical machinery and equipment, wheat, flour, raw materials for industrial plants, natural gas, linen, rice, and medical supplies, which were imported from Iran, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Pakistan, China, and Turkmenistan, spokesman of the ministry Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad said.

The exports included cotton, figs, raisins, yams, and coal to Pakistan, India, the UAE, Uzbekistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Turkiye, China, Iraq, and Tajikistan.

He explained without providing details Afghanistan's exports to Pakistan and China decreased in 2024 compared to 2023, but exports to Turkiye and India increased.

Afghanistan's exports to Iran, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and the UAE have doubled.

Just trade between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan has increased even sixfold over the past three years.

Most of Afghanistan's exported items to Uzbekistan are dried fruit, fruit juice, apricot, sesame, and carpets, and most of our imported items are electricity, flour, beans, chemical fertilizers, oil, and gas.

Trade between Afghanistan and countries in the region has increased over the past three years as the level of regional cooperation has now doubled.

Afghanistan is now moving from bilateral to regional as it can link with many countries and has the capability to play its central role as a land bridge between Central Asia and South Asia, and the Middle East and the Far East.

With the Islamic Emirate takeover and the improvement of the overall security situation across the country, regional cooperation and trade relations between Afghanistan and countries in the region and world have considerably increased, which will help our country achieve sustainable economic development and make the country's economy even stronger.

Fida Mohammad

The importance of vocational training in reducing unemployment in Afghanistan

Providing vocational training opportunities for Afghanistan's youth can significantly reduce the unemployment rate, promote self-sufficiency, and prevent migration to neighboring countries.

Afghanistan is a country where youth unemployment is particularly high, and the government alone cannot provide employment opportunities for all young people in the public sector. No country has a system where all citizens are employed in government institutions. Instead, governments worldwide facilitate vocational training in various fields to empower young individuals, enabling them to create job opportunities for themselves and others.

Government Initiatives for Vocational Training

Recognizing this need, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, since the establishment of the Islamic Emirate, has launched short-term vocational training programs in collaboration with domestic and international organizations. These programs aim to equip young people with practical skills, thereby reducing unemployment and fostering self-reliance.

Officials from the ministry have frequently highlighted that, upon graduation, trainees who have completed vocational training in various fields are better positioned to secure employment. The ministry's initiative of conducting short-term vocational courses is a strategic effort to combat unemployment and alleviate poverty among the youth.

Recent Efforts and Achievements

A few days ago, Mohammad Zahid Ahmadzai, the Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, speaking at the graduation ceremony of 155 students said that these students had undergone six months of training in tailoring, building electrical maintenance, and refrigerator and air conditioning repair, with financial and technical support from UNESCO Japan. Ahmadzai pointed out that the unemployment rate in the country is alarmingly high. However, with the cooperation of both local and international organizations, vocational training opportunities can be expanded, allowing graduates to establish themselves in the job market.



The Deputy Minister further emphasized: "Our ministry operates in all provinces of the country. This year, with the support of domestic and international organizations, we have successfully provided vocational training to 35,000 young people in the capital and other provinces. Additionally, we have distributed recognized certifications along with necessary tools for their respective trades."

Impact on the Economy and Society

This initiative is commendable and deserves appreciation. Not only does vocational training help in reducing unemployment, but it also prevents brain drain by discouraging migration to neighboring countries.

Currently, we witness many young people leaving Afghanistan due to a lack of job opportunities. If comprehensive vocational training programs were accessible to all youth nationwide, they would have the ability to establish careers within their own country. This would significantly reduce the likelihood of migration and contribute to national development.

By expanding vocational training and providing adequate resources, Afghanistan can pave the way for a skilled workforce that drives economic growth and ensures a sustainable future for its citizens. **Abdul Rashid**

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USD	GBP	INR	PKR	EUR	IRR	AED
01	01	1000	1000	01	1000	01
AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN
73.50	90.90	847	251	75.87	01.33	19.96

SPORTS

Para Handball Championship kicks off in Balkh

The Para Handball Championship for the Northern Zone has officially begun in Balkh province, bringing together five teams and 70 athletes. The tournament is organized by the Afghanistan National Paralympic Federation in collaboration with the Balkh Department of Physical Education and Sports. The matches are being held at the Imam Khomeini Gymnasium in Mazar-e-Sharif.

The primary objective of this tournament is to encourage Paralympic athletes to participate in sports and promote the growth of para handball in Balkh province. Organizers hope that such events will inspire more athletes with disabilities to engage in competitive sports, enhancing inclusivity and sporting opportunities in Afghanistan. The tournament is set to last for three days, during which the participating teams will compete for the championship title. The event marks a significant step toward developing para sports in northern Afghanistan and strengthening the presence of athletes with disabilities in national-level competitions. Officials have emphasized the importance of promoting para sports, not only for physical fitness but also for empowering individuals with disabilities and integrating them into the broader sports community. With growing support from sports authorities and organizations, para handball is expected to gain further recognition and expansion in the region. **The Kabul Times**

Kane Williamson becomes second-fastest player to score 7,000 ODI runs

New Zealand cricket star Kane Williamson has achieved a remarkable milestone, becoming the second-fastest player in history to reach 7,000 runs in One Day Internationals (ODIs). He accomplished this feat during his 159th innings while playing against South Africa, where he scored an unbeaten 133 runs.

Williamson's achievement places him in elite company on the international stage. The record for the fastest 7,000 ODI runs belongs to South African cricketer Hashim Amla, who reached the milestone in just 150 innings. Meanwhile, Indian cricket legend Virat Kohli holds the third position, having reached 7,000 runs in 161 innings.

Williamson's consistent performances and ability to anchor the innings have been key to his success in ODI cricket. His latest innings against South Africa not only helped his team but also reinforced his reputation as one of the most dependable batsmen in world cricket.

Cricket analysts and fans have praised Williamson's accomplishment, highlighting his technical brilliance and calm approach at the crease. His achievement further cements his legacy as one of the finest batsmen of the modern era.

With this milestone, Williamson continues to be a crucial player for New Zealand, leading by example and setting new records on the global stage. His journey in international cricket is a testament to his dedication, skill, and leadership.

The Kabul Times

Taekwondo competition held in Mazar-e-Sharif

A taekwondo competition featuring 70 athletes was organized by the local branch of the National Taekwondo Federation in Mazar-e-Sharif, the capital of Balkh province. The event aimed to promote the sport of taekwondo and encourage a culture of mutual acceptance among participants.

The competition brought together athletes from Balkh and Samangan provinces, who competed in different age categories, including juniors, teenagers, and adults. The tournament provided a platform for young and experienced athletes to showcase their skills and gain competitive experience.

After the event, Rasa Youth Club from Balkh province secured first place, demonstrating outstanding performance throughout the competition. Samangan province claimed second place, while Nokhbegan Club from Balkh took third place.

This tournament highlighted the growing popularity of taekwondo in northern Afghanistan and the commitment of local sports officials to fostering talent and sportsmanship among young athletes. Organizers emphasized that such events play a crucial role in promoting physical fitness, discipline, and friendly competition among participants from different regions.

The success of this event reflects the dedication of the National Taekwondo Federation in supporting and developing taekwondo across Afghanistan. Officials expressed hope that similar tournaments will continue to be held in the future, encouraging more young athletes to take part in the sport and strengthening regional unity through sportsmanship.

The Kabul Times

Canada vows swift retaliation to 'unjustified' Trump tariffs

Canada will give a "clear and calibrated" response to the latest trade barriers planned by US President Donald Trump, its industry minister says.

Trump says he will levy a 25% import tax on all steel and aluminium products entering the US from 12 March. Canada is the top exporter of both metals to the US.

Since returning to office last month, Trump has announced a wide range of these tariffs to try to protect US jobs and industries. Economists say they are likely to raise prices for ordinary Americans.

The new tariffs were "totally unjustified", Industry Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne said, as Canada found itself in a second trade standoff with Washington in a matter of weeks.

A range of metal-exporting countries are scrambling to make a deal in response to the tariff on steel and aluminium vowed by Trump.

The US imports six million tonnes of Canadian steel products and more than three million tonnes of aluminium products per year - more than from any other country.

Canadian metal exports were making North America as a whole "more competitive and secure", Champagne argued in Monday evening's statement.

Canadian province leaders, too, have condemned Trump's plan. Quebec's François Legault said his province alone sent millions of tonnes of aluminium to the US per year - asking whether Trump would prefer to source the metal from his rival, China.

Opposition leader Pierre Poilievre said he would issue matching tariffs targeting the US, if elected as Canadian prime minister.

The head of the Canadian Steel Producers Association warned that a range of sectors could be hit, saying similar measures by Trump during his first term had damaged industry in both countries.

"We have steel that they need and they have steel that we need… we need each other, Catherine Cobden told CBC.

Tariffs are taxes charged on goods imported from other countries. Companies that import goods from abroad pay the tariffs to the US government.

Economists warn that they are likely to raise prices for US consumers, for example if sellers choose to raise prices after paying higher duties on imported goods.

US businesses dependent on imports have also raised concerns, but Trump says his plans will boost domestic production. On Monday, he said his plan was "a big deal, the beginning of making America rich again".

The taxes themselves - which Trump also used during his first term in the White House - are key to the returning president's economic vision. He is also seeking to address a trade deficit, which means that the US imports more than it exports.

Trump's allies also say he sees such measures as an essential negotiating tool when he wants another country to do something for him.

Since returning to the White House last month, Trump has already been in one trade standoff with Canada and America's other neighbour, Mexico.

But he agreed on 4 February to delay for 30 days his threat of 25% tariffs on all goods arriving from both countries. The postponement came after his two neighbours vowed action to tackle illegal migration and the flow of drugs to the US.

Both countries delayed their own retaliatory measures at the same time.

Canada and Mexico are some of Trump's top trade partners, along with China - which Trump has targeted with a 10% tariff on all goods entering the US. That tax has already come into force, and China has hit back with measures against US goods.

In addition to his other, delayed plan to target Canada and Mexico with specific tariffs, Trump has also hinted he could levy taxes on goods imported from the European Union "pretty soon".

Asked in recent days about the threat of retaliation from his trade partners, Trump said: "I don't mind."

bbc

North Korea warns of retaliation after US nuclear submarine docks in Busan

North Korea has said its military forces are ready to take any action necessary after a US Navy fast-attack nuclear submarine docked in a port in the South Korean city of Busan, and accused the United States of posing a grave threat to its national security.

North Korea's state-run KCNA news agency on Tuesday quoted the country's Ministry of Defence as saying in a statement that the presence of a US nuclear submarine on the Korean Peninsula was a "clear expression of the US invariable hysteria for confrontation". "We express grave concern over the US dangerous hostile military act that can lead the acute military confrontation in the region around the Korean Peninsula to an actual armed force conflict," the statement said.

The ministry said North Korea would "unhesitatingly exercise the legitimate right to punish the provokers", as it accused the US of being a "hegemonic entity" which "blindly believes in domination through power".

The USS Alexandria submarine docked at a Busan port on Monday for supplies and to provide a rest for its crew, according to South Korea's Defence Ministry. The stop will also provide a chance for the South Korean and US navies to exchange information and formulate a combined defence posture, the ministry added.

The USS Alexandria, part of the US's Pacific Fleet, is a fast-attack, nuclear-powered submarine armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles. South Korea's Armed Forces declined to comment on the North Korean government's statement. Pyongyang asserts that joint US-South Korea military activities are a threat to peace on the Korean Peninsula, and regards them as rehearsals for an invasion of North Korea. On Sunday, North Korea warned of "undesirable consequences" after a series of exercises was conducted by the US and South Korean allies just 16 miles (25.7km) from North Korea's border. **aljazeera**

Afghanistan redefining its role...

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In the end, redefining Afghanistan's international relations is not merely a superficial shift in foreign policy; rather, it signifies a profound and fundamental change in the country's way of thinking and approach.

This transformation is a response to past challenges and the lessons learned from historical experiences.

By utilizing its economic, cultural, and human potential, Afghanistan must strive to become a model nation in establishing independent and cooperative foreign relations. Although this path is fraught with obstacles and challenges, in the long run, it can pave the way for the emergence of a new, self-sufficient, and influential Afghanistan in the international system.

In this regard, national determination and international cooperation will play a decisive role. By trusting in its internal capabilities and leveraging diplomatic and legal instruments, Afghanistan can smooth its path toward independence and prosperity.

Only in this way can the country be recognized as a bridge between civilizations and a force for strengthening peace and sustainable development in the region.

Aburagheb Amani